

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT

575 S. 10th Street, Lincoln NE 68508 402-441-6000

FOR RELEASE: August 27th, 2020

FOR MORE INFO: Chief Jeff Bliemeister, 402-441-7238

Officer Erin Spilker, Public Information, 402-441-7226

Officer Identified in Shooting near 33rd and Vine

On Wednesday, August 26th, 2020, at approximately 11:34 a.m., the Metro Area Fugitive Task Force, the Lincoln Police Department Gang Unit, and Lincoln police investigators were searching for 17-year-old Felipe Vazquez in the 3200 block of Vine Street. Investigators were attempting to apprehend Vazquez for an outstanding arrest warrant for 2nd Degree Assault related to the murder of Edward Varejcka that occurred in March of 2020.

As investigators were attempting to contact individuals inside a residence, a suspect shot Investigator Mario Herrera in the torso. Mario has undergone multiple surgeries and is still fighting for his life. He is listed in critical condition. Mario is a 23-year veteran of the Lincoln Police Department, currently assigned to the Criminal Investigations Unit. Our department stands with Mario, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. Family has informed us that Mario has received numerous blood transfusions and are asking those who want to help, to donate blood.

As is standard protocol, Lincoln Police Department Gang Investigator Cole Jennings has been placed on administrative leave due to his involvement in yesterday's events. During the incident, Investigator Jennings returned fire after Mario was shot. Investigator Jennings is a 11-year veteran of the Lincoln Police Department. The purpose of administrative leave is to facilitate investigation of the incident for any criminal or policy violations. The leave is also intended to ensure that the officer is physically, mentally, and emotionally ready to return to full duty.

The criminal investigation into the shooting of Investigator Mario Herrera is being conducted by the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office.

For blood donations, make an appointment at the [Nebraska Community Blood Bank Hero Hub](#) or by calling 402-486-9414.

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